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## BRITAIN IS BEATING BACK POVERTY

### Striking Production Figures RECOVERY CORNER TURNED SAYS MORRISON

London, Dec. 15.—Increasing evidence that Britain is beating back poverty has brought a new surge of optimism to these islands. Deputy Prime Minister Herbert Morrison broadcast on Saturday night that Britain has rounded the "recovery corner."

"Let's look at the facts and figures and be proud of ourselves as a people," he said. "I am a last to start cheering before the game is won," but "it's not going too badly."

## Hand-To-Hand Fighting In Kashmir

New Delhi, Dec. 14.—Hand-to-hand fighting and night attacks on hilltop positions, reminiscent of the past Indian troops played in the mountain warfare in Italy, have marked a weekend of fighting in Kashmir.

Over 320 raiders were killed by Indian army troops in the Uri area of Northwest Kashmir alone in the last three days.

Tonight's Indian Defence Ministry communiqué, which gave these figures, added that Indian forces also suffered casualties.

Indian troops cleared a hill position of raiders south of Poonch, in Southwestern Kashmir, and two parties of raiders were shelled in Jhangar-Kauchera area.

Indian army and Kashmir State force patrols killed 11 raiders in two encounters in Jammu Province.

**RAIDER'S LOSSES**  
Royal Indian Air Force planes carried out reconnaissance flights over the Chakothi-Dornel Road (in the Northwest) and the Akhnur-Bimbar-Poonch area (in the Southwest), the communiqué added.

A band of raiders, 1,000 strong, in a two-wave attack four miles south of Uri, on the main West Road from Srinagar, the Kashmir capital, to the Pakistan frontier, lost 200 killed and 100 wounded, a Reuters despatch from Jammu reported today.

There was hand-to-hand fighting before the tribesmen were driven back.—Reuters.

## EDITORIAL

### Accommodation Problem

"KEY MONEY" for vacant living quarters has been declared illegal under the Landlord and Tenants Ordinance, but the racket continues. Its variants keep being invented, some more subtle and surreptitious. One result is that a considerable amount of habitable property on both sides of the harbour remains empty—or apparently so. Here again the frustrated searcher for accommodation is thwarted. Any accusation that a landlord is keeping his premises vacant until "key money" is produced can be easily countered by the owner putting in a couple of "loose" to represent tenants, and the property is to all intents and purposes no longer empty. There should be some method of officially putting a stop to these tactics. The demand for accommodation is as great today as it was a year ago, and there is no excuse for property being unlet. One suggestion has been advanced before, and it is repeated: Government should compile a register of all property owners and satisfy itself that all houses and flats in a habitable condition are fully occupied. Simultaneously Government should compile a register of residents seeking accommodation, and where it is discovered that a landlord has failed fully to let his property, the Authorities should have the power to put in tenants drawn from its register. It is not denied that such a pro-

cedure would involve a considerable amount of patient work. But if it succeeds in helping to solve the "key money" racket, and at the same time puts needy tenants into possession of accommodation, it will be well worth attempting. There is another problem connected with accommodation—the high hotel and boarding houses charges. They are much too severe for the average European and middle-class Chinese. A man with his wife and child has to pay up to \$700 a month for the use of one room—probably equal to 65 percent of the family income—and then he faces other greatly increased living costs which absorb every cent he earns. The experts have computed that if a man has to pay more than 33 percent out of his wages for rent and taxes, he is forced to live on an economic level. When, therefore, a family man in Hongkong has to surrender anything up to 70 percent of his income on food and lodgings his economic plight is obvious. It is not suggested that hotels and boarding houses should become charitable institutions, but where they are accommodating families whose incomes are in the middle level class, and who can find no alternative place of abode, they could, perhaps, offer somewhat more reasonable terms. We suggest that Government re-approaches the proprietors to discuss a revised Gentlemen's Agreement for accommodation charges.

## The Late Earl Baldwin



### Lord Baldwin Dies In His Sleep

Stourport, Worcestershire, Dec. 14.—Lord Baldwin died in his sleep last night at his home here. He was 88 years old.

Better known to the public as plain Mr. Stanley Baldwin, he was created Earl Baldwin of Bewdley in 1937 when he governed most of his life with public life.

He was a leading figure on the abdication crisis of 1936 when the newly crowned King Edward the Eighth left the British Throne to his brother, the present King. The Prime Minister held urgent consultations with the heads of the Dominion Governments, had audiences with the King himself and finally went to the House of Commons with King Edward's message of abdication.

**LONG POLITICAL LIFE**  
Another event in his long and distinguished career as a public servant, was his leadership of his Government through the dark days of the 1938 general strike.

In his youth, Lord Baldwin was associated with his family's iron foundry. He was 41 before he entered political life as the Conservative Member for the Bewdley division which he represented in Parliament for 29 years, during 12 of which he was Prime Minister.

Lord Baldwin had been suffering from a slight cold for a few days and was found dead by a servant who went to call him early this morning. It was learned later today.

A family meeting was held tonight at Lord Baldwin's home at Audley Hall and it was understood that the funeral would take place in Birmingham. The actual day and time will be decided by the new Earl.—Reuters.

## Piracy Report

Reports were current in Hongkong this morning that the JCGL ship, Van Heutz, which left the harbour yesterday for Swatow and Amoy, had been pirated.

The Telegraph was informed this morning, both by the Manager of JCGL and the Water Police that no such report had been received by them.

Subsequent information is that the ship is returning to port this afternoon. A message is reported to have been received from the master of the vessel stating that the piracy attempt was unsuccessful.

## South China No Longer Restless

Shanghai, Dec. 15.—South China ports have lost that restless feeling witnessed during the war, Admiral Charles M. Cooke, Commander of the US Western Pacific Fleet, said in Peking yesterday, according to Chinese reports.

Admiral Cooke has just returned to his base in Tsingtao following a prolonged tour of Southern Asia, during which he called at Hongkong, Singapore, Manila and Formosa.—Reuters.

## Soviet Currency Reform

### SURRENDER OF ROUBLES FOR CERTAIN DEPOSITS Fixed Retail Prices For Commodities

London, Dec. 14.—Soviet currency is to be reformed on Tuesday, December 16, under a decree broadcast by the Moscow Radio today, which said bank deposits of "overwhelming majority of the depositors" would retain their previous value.

The decree was issued in the name of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union and the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, which declared that the reform necessitated by wartime developments would leave unchanged the Soviet obligations under agreements with other countries.

"The Soviet State faces the task of strengthening the exchange rate of the rouble as well as the abolition of the rationing system for supplies and of proceeding to expand trade at unified State prices," the decree stated.

It recorded that during the war the circulation of money increased while the production of consumption goods fell, adding that the monetary circulation had been swelled by "false money" issued by the invaders during World War II.

The State prices for rationed goods had been maintained constant, but free market prices had at times risen to ten to 15 times the pre-war level—situation "exploited by speculative elements" to accumulate great quantities.

## EXCHANGE RATES

Details of the proposed exchange rates for the new money were given as follows: Bank deposits up to 3,000 roubles at par value. Bank deposits between 3,000 and 10,000 roubles; 3,000 roubles at par, the remainder at three old roubles to two new roubles.

Deposits over 10,000 roubles; 3,000 roubles at par, 7,000 roubles at the rate of three old roubles for two new roubles and the remainder at two old roubles to one new rouble.

Money in co-operative undertakings and organisations and collective farms: Five old roubles to four new roubles.

State loans issued before 1947: To be consolidated into a "unified loan" on the basis of three old roubles in previous loans for one new rouble in the unified loan. The decree pointed out that this was a more advantageous rate than was laid down for the conversions of cash.

"While the currency reform is being effected the wages of workers and employees as well as the income of peasants from State deliveries and other labour incomes of all sections of the population, will not be affected by the reform but will be paid in the new money at the previous rates," the statement declared.

Bank deposit transactions would be suspended on December 15, 16 and 17.

## STATE RETAIL PRICE

The decree announced that in future the difference between the "commercial" (free-market) price and the "rationed" price would be abolished, making way for a single State retail price. It instructed the Ministry of Commerce to fix in accordance with the reform, new prices for food products and industrial products. The new schedule, however, would not apply to collective farm markets.

The new uniform prices for industrial goods would be on an average less than one-third of the present commercial prices.

The decree promised that the losses incurred by the overvaluing majority of working people through the conversion would be "short-term and insignificant," while it would hit, first of all, "the privileged elements."

The working population's losses would be fully compensated by the abolition of high commercial prices and the reduction of existing rationed prices on bread and cereals. However, the population must bear some of the "great sacrifices" required, "especially as this will be the last sacrifice."

The rationed prices for bread would be reduced by the average of 12 percent and for cereals by ten percent. Beer would be about ten percent cheaper.

Unified prices of other foodstuffs would be maintained in general at existing levels. Wine and vodka would remain unchanged in price. Unified prices for industrial goods would be at a rather higher level as compared with low ration prices although reduced by an average of one-third as compared with commercial prices.

## UNCHANGED PRICES

Prices of meat, fish, fats, sugar, tobacco, confectionery, potatoes and other vegetables, would be the same as previous ration prices.

New prices would be fixed for milk and eggs.

The decree was signed by Marshal Stalin and M. Andrei Zhdanov, the secretary of the Communist Party central committee.

The exchange of the money would be effected generally in the week beginning December 16, but in remote districts a fortnight would be allowed.

During the exchange period, old money would be accepted for all payments at the rate of one-tenth of its face value.

Old money not changed would be cancelled on a fixed date.—Reuters.

## Canada's Cost Of Living Soars

Ottawa, Dec. 14.—A steady upward march in Canada's cost of living brought increased pressure today from consumer groups for Parliamentary intervention. However, the government held to its chosen course of avoiding any general imposition of price controls.

A delegation of more than 75 housewives from eastern Canadian cities called on Finance Minister Douglas Abbott on Saturday. They told him they would pay prices rolled back to the pre-1945 level, general restoration of price controls, and reinstatement of subsidies on flour, milk and fuel. They asked reimbursement of the excess profits tax and establishment of a price control board.—Associated Press.

## British Sub's Remarkable Submerging Achievement

London, Dec. 14.—A British submarine remained submerged for several weeks then surfaced under her own power with her full crew of seven officers and 60 men in good health, the Admiralty said today.

Two to three days was the previous limit of submergence.

A succinct British Admiralty announcement reported that HM Submarine Alliance, of 1,250 tons had returned to its base at Portsmouth after a cruise in the tropical waters of Sierra Leone, Africa "to test living conditions on board a submarine during prolonged dives in tropical waters."

An Admiralty spokesman declined to disclose how long the submarine was submerged.

It was learned, however, that the Alliance had been fitted with an improved version of the German

## Romance Of A King

Lausanne, Dec. 14.—The Rumanian Government's view on the possibility of a marriage between 20-year-old King Michael of Rumania and Princess Anne of Bourbon-Parma, were brought to Switzerland today by Count Dmitri Negel, Marshal of the Rumanian Court.

Count Negel, who will convey these views to King Michael, travelled by train from Bucharest.

He was expected to arrive tomorrow morning in Lausanne, where King Michael is staying with his mother, Queen Helen, and Princess Anne.

King Michael will spend tomorrow in conference with Count Negel and an announcement may be made afterwards.—Reuters.

## World Rice Harvest Prospects

Washington, Dec. 14.—The world's rice crop for the harvest year of 1947-1948 is expected to be 100,000,000 bushels greater than last year's, but will still be 350,000,000 bushels below the pre-war average, the United States Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations said today.

The 1947-1948 crop, it was estimated, will be 7,050,000,000 bushels compared with 6,900,000,000 bushels for the previous year, with most of the production increase coming from Asiatic areas affected by the war.

A record acreage has been planted in Europe, where production will slightly exceed pre-war. North American and African crops are above the high level of the previous year, but a production decline is possible in South America.

Asia's production was estimated at 6,580,000,000 bushels in 1946-1947, and 7,100,000,000 bushels pre-war.

Excluding India, the acreage of the Asiatic countries has increased by two million to three million bushels.

## BURMA'S PROGRESS

Primarily because of some reduction in India's acreage and production, Asia's total harvest shows a relatively small rise. In the pre-war surplus areas of Burma, Siam and French Indo-China, the total production might be 60,000,000 or 100,000,000 bushels greater than last year.

The greatest progress in increasing acreage was in Burma, where nearly 800,000 more acres were planted. Siam's production is about 25 percent greater, but there is some decrease in French Indo-China's production.

China's production is only slightly higher with an acreage still 1,400,000 acres less than the pre-war average.

The South Korean crop is 15 per cent higher. Japan's acreage is higher, but unfavourable weather has reduced the production below last year's. The Philippines' production exceeded the pre-war average and 80,000 more acres were planted in Malaya.—Reuters.

## SENT BACK HOME

London, Dec. 14.—Clement Michalland, 20-year-old Frenchman, described as the owner of a Swiss hotel, was sent back to Switzerland today soon after he arrived at a London airport from Zurich.

Emigration officers questioned him and found his papers were not in order.—Reuters.



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"Calling car 38, calling car 38—someone's stolen car 37—that is all!"

**The rag-and-bone  
man saves us  
millions a year**by **BERNARD HARRIS**

THE other day I was talking to my local rag-and-bone man about 95-year-old George Plowman, who has died leaving £14,000 and some valuable freehold property—the fruits of pushing a rag-and-bone barrow round Windsor for 75 years.

"None of us will do as well as him," he said. "We're too much controlled by the Government."

"I get only about £1 a hundred-weight for mixed rags, which isn't much more than I got before the war."

"Collecting a hundredweight of rags takes a bit of doing these days when people hang on to things so long. 'Make do and mend' doesn't do us any good."

**Valuable job**

But though Britain's thousands of rag-and-bone men may not be making a fortune for themselves, they are doing a specially valuable job for the country just now. They are playing a part in checking the downward drift in our standard of living.

Precise figures are lacking, but it is estimated that they are saving us £5,000,000 a year in imported raw materials. They are also making a not-to-be-despised contribution to our exports.

To find out just how important their trade is, I have been having a look round one of the London factories of a company who have been in the wholesale rag and textile waste business for more than a century.

Their chairman, Mr Jack Myers, a great-grandson of the founder of the business, tells me that about half their raw material starts on its journey to them by way of the rag-and-bone man's barrow.

**Blitz hoses**

The rest is made up of new rags, such as cuttings from the textile factories, and surplus Government stores.

Piled high in a corner of the factory were old canvas fire hoses, some of which had done service in the London blitz.

There were vast piles of haversacks and webbing equipment, glider tow ropes, canvas fire haws, and worn-out Post-Office mail bags. Later on some of the old fire hoses may be going up in smoke in your home. For their fate is to be broken down into the type of fibre which alone can make satisfactory paper for cigarettes.

Of the old linen and cotton rags which were being sorted by women on upper floors, the best white sorts were being set aside for consignment to a paper mill in Hampshire. They will end up in your pocket book as Bank of England notes.

Other grades of rag go into the manufacture of blotting paper, blood filters, ledger papers, and legal documents which must have the quality of permanence.

The ash-tray on which you stub out your cigarettes may also contain some of these old rags. For the inclusion of preprepared textile wastes is essential to give strength to many types of plastic moulded articles.

But the rags do not necessarily re-appear in a different product. Many of them become cloth again.

Dewsbury, in Yorkshire, is the great centre for the manufacture of cloth from regenerated wool, recovered from rags and tailors' clippings, and mixed with virgin wool.

**Runs in families**

It is in that district that the art of rag-sorting and grading finds its highest expression, for leading firms list many hundred grades. Rag-sorting is a specialised business, which for the most part runs in families, with mothers passing on their skill to their daughters.

But, in London, the young girls are now showing a preference for radio factories and other more colourful occupations.

Apart from fineness and coarseness, one of the most important points in rag-grading is to sort out the innumerable grades of colour.

By grading the rags into colours before breaking them down into fibre, the costly process of dyeing the finished cloth is avoided.

Thus, German field-grey uniforms are being reduced to fibre and subsequently transformed into the cheaper types of flannel trousers with a minimum of processing.

**Earning dollars**

In the 18 months to June last the firm I visited alone earned us more than a million dollars (£250,000) by selling rags and waste materials to America. They are making substantial exports to other hard currency countries.

One of their exports which I saw being prepared for shipment intrigued me. It was composed of black-out curtains, which once obscured the lights of Government offices in Whitehall.

Now the curtains are to have a new lease of life—as clothing for peasants in the Far East.

**BY THE WAY  
by Beachcomber**

I READ that the Ontario Federation of Women Teachers' Association, of which I was Chairman from 1934-1937, "has submitted to the Department of Education," of which I was Treasurer from 1931-1933, "a plan for a compulsory course in glamour for teacher candidates."

Before being accepted as a qualified teacher, a woman will have to satisfy a panel of film actresses that she can break off a lesson at a given moment to sing in a low, hoarse voice a song about the misery of love; slink and sway about the schoolroom in a bathing slip; dance on a concrete pianoforte played by four Cubans during the history lesson.

**Epitaph**

Here lies the old club bore.  
Whose talk was always irrelevant.  
One day he fractured his fore  
While trying to bite an elephant.

**In passing**

TWO women stood talking, close to me. A very small boy, aged about three, passed by, wearing nothing, but an exquisite bathing dress. The first woman said: "Look at that, now. You'd think he was

A newspaperman sets out  
to sample—the politics in  
Oxford and Cambridge

FIRMLY refusing a second sherry, the young man with the cavalry moustache picked up his typewriter and announced that he had work to do. It was the same typewriter on which, not long ago, he had banged out 30-page Intelligence reports.

He is typical of the new generation of undergraduates who pace the cloisters of Oxford, who cycle down Cambridge's Petty Cury.

He is an ex-Commando and, if he has not already written a book about his experiences with the Chetniks in Yugoslavia, or his escape from the Japs in Burma, it is because he is too busy learning Anglo-Saxon and helping his wife to bath the children at night. For the ex-Service undergraduate is getting on for 30, married, a parent, and his problems are the problems of maturity.

A schoolboy when the Union was refusing to fight for King and country and welcoming the Red Flag, he came up to the university in 1939, or 1940 to spend a term of talk before joining the Army. You would have found all the fashionable Left authors on his bookshelves; you would have met him at the Socialist Club.

In 1945 he voted Socialist. And in 1946, back at the university, he was opposing Tory motions in the Union debates.

Early this year he began to change his mind. And the Tories, at both universities, began to gather strength. To-day they are in the majority. At Oxford the undergraduates' Conservative Association claims more than 1,500 members—an all-time record. At Cambridge the Tories recently polled 60 percent when the student newspaper, Varsity, asked: "If there was a General Election next week, which party would you vote for?"

**Better type**

WHY this reversal of opinion at the universities? I have just spent a week in Oxford and Cambridge trying to find out. First I asked—the dons. This is what historian A. L. ROWSE, of All Souls, Oxford, thinks about it:—

The political talent spotters  
are watching the Universities  
there they hope to find  
bright young men of conviction  
to fight the coming elections.  
What are these potential M.P.s  
talking about . . . how far have  
they travelled since the Oxford  
Union's notorious 1933 resolution  
—"We will not fight" . . . ?

**The  
Universities****swing  
Right**by  
**GORDON SEWELL**

"I am beside myself with admiration for this generation. As a result of their experience of life, the men back from the war have acquired a much more responsible outlook. That naturally means they do not have the doctrinaire Leftist attitude which was so characteristic of the 'thirties."

Once a Leftist himself ("I remain a member of the Labour Party out of sheer conservatism"), Mr Rowse believes that "the well-known names of Bloomsbury," who dominated undergraduate thought before the war, have lost their intellectual monopoly. "And about time, too."

"There is nothing more sickening than the attitude of these writers," declared Mr Rowse with indignation. "They have nothing positive to offer, and after all this country has been through, after all it has done for the world, they still cannot find it in their hearts to say a good word for Britain or British Empire. They have constantly denigrated the nation and its institutions, and now they are outdated, outmoded."

**Revival—2**

END of the Fabian epoch, in fact? No easy question for DEAN COLLINS, of Oriel, to answer. You see, Mr Collins is an enthusiastic Socialist. And a fervent Christian. "It is true," he admitted, "the Conservatives are winning at Oxford."

But Mr Collins is not worried, for he sees Christian inspiration in the politics of the Left and the Right. And in Christian Action he has welded together members of all parties (except the tiny Communist minority) and all Churches, including the Roman Catholics.

Christian Action stands for Christianity in public affairs, and last time it held a rally 3,000 people turned up. This looks like being the new Oxford Movement. (The first one, John Henry Newman's, also started at Oriel.)

Here is Mr Collins's opinion of the young Oxford Tory: "Not unconcerned about social justice. But for him the most important value is freedom—and that's a Christian value, too. He considers the undergraduate to be the ordinary human person, of whatever class, if oppressed by the State."

**Church lead**

THE Master of Campion Hall (FATHER T. COBBISLEY, S.J.) shares Dean Collins's optimism about the prospects of religion in the university, and points out that earnest members of the Church of England are leading the Tory revival. "Oxford is more Christian than at any time during the past 100 years," is his considered opinion.

NOW over to Cambridge. NBERTRAND RUSSELL, walking slowly, very slowly, across the quadrangle at Trinity, seemed embarrassed by my question: "Why has young Cambridge gone Tory?" He is president of the University Labour Club.

He did not know the answer, but maybe the war had something to do with it. "You see, the men are so much older," he said wearily. "It is impossible to make comparisons with the prewar students."

"My guess is—" began PROFESSOR D. W. BROGAN in his room at Peterhouse. But a Professor of Political Science should not involve himself. Still, if you are interested, there is an article in the current Cambridge Journal from Dr Brogan's pen wondering whether the French Revolution was a Good Thing, after all.

**No rowdyism**

DR. LEAVIS, the university's leading literary critic—with a queue of students, essay in hand, waiting outside his room at Downing—took five minutes off to discuss politics with me.

"Yes the Union debates have shown a swing to the Right. But I am very critical of debates. They ruin discussion. And I am trying to substitute discussion for lectures—which are absurd."

"There is no Socialist salvationism now. But no Tory reaction either. Tradition! Everything depends on tradition—but remember, tradition is a living thing."

"A swing to the Right?" A Marxist economist echoed my query. "Nonsense. The university always was reactionary. But I must say it is a pleasant change to teach older men who seem grateful for being taught."

And the undergraduates? Certainly they are a brilliant lot, these ex-Service scholars; no less brilliant than the faded bright young people of the last postwar period. But very different. No rowdy rags, no heavy drinking, no fooling around with sex. Instead, a search for stability, a re-discovery of the English tradition, a growing sympathy for religious values.

I talked to them in their clubs, in the Union, in their rooms, in Clive Restaurants. They are, for the most part, men determined to get a good degree and make a career. (Business or industry in preference to the Civil Service. And there is a lot of talk about emigrating to the Empire.)

Perhaps they are over-serious. But time is too short for frivolity.

**Hard road**

SOCIALLY, the Tories do not differ from the Socialists. Many have trodden the same hard road, from secondary or grammar school. These outnumber the "tuntns," shouting people by ten to one in the earnest study groups which the Conservative Associations at both universities have started recently, imitating Leftwing technique.

"We're Tories—critical Tories," an ex-major told me in Oxford's Carlton Club, "because we no longer believe there are any ready-made solutions, because we realise that there is no alternative to individual effort and the empirical approach." And that goes for the Cambridge Tories, too.

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